



## State of Connecticut

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### Testimony in Support of HB 5774 Children Committee February 14, 2013

Chairpersons Bartolomeo and Urban, Ranking Members Linares and Betts, and distinguished members of the Children Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of **House Bill 5774, *An Act Establishing a Tax Credit for Corporate Support of Summer Bridge Programs.***

The intent of this proposal is to provide children with opportunities to participate in Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) programs by encouraging businesses to become partners in the program within their communities.

ELOs, such as New Haven's Summer Bridge program, can play an important role in reducing the achievement gap. After-school and summer activities are vital components to children's academic development and offer a unique way of engaging children in meaningful activities. While schools or other entities may provide the facilities/physical space for these bridge programs, businesses can serve as a partner in the endeavor by providing financial resources for the content of programs, activities, and projects offered through the summer bridge program. This cooperative effort helps foster strong community relations and allows ELOs to leverage private resources to fund the activities.

A business tax credit for the support of these programs will help attract greater sponsorship of the programs and will help ELOs expand to other communities. The cost of the tax credit to the state would be offset by providing the students with a meaningful path to success.

I appreciate the committee's time in considering this bill and urge your support for it. Thank you.